

(b) The Government has initiated various measures to promote export of agricultural products. These, *inter alia*, include setting up of agri. export zones to provide enhanced international market access and improved infrastructural facilities, better flow of credit, assistance for reducing the marketing costs such as for transport, handling and processing on export of selected agricultural commodities as also removal of export restrictions like requirement for registration, packaging, etc. Besides various agriculture development schemes providing assistance to farmers on agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, insecticides, pesticides as also for research and development and extension for reducing production costs and for improving efficiency of agricultural production are also being implemented. The schemes are generally not product specific. Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojana has been introduced from 1.4.04 for promoting the exports of fruits, vegetables, flowers, minor forest produce and their value added products. Exporters of such products, which may include farmers, are entitled to duty credit scrip equivalent to 5% of the FOB value of exports for each licensing year.

Review of Trade Relations Between India and EEC

†1514. SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review of the economic and trade relations between India and European Economic Community has been made; and

(b) If so, what measures have been suggested for development in trade relations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) India-European Union (EU) economic and trade relationship is reviewed every year by the India-European Commission (EC) Joint Commission.

The 16th Session of the India-EC Joint Commission was held in Brussels on 18 September 2006. The measures suggested for development of trade relations are:

(i) Holding meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Food Processing Industry, JWG on Agriculture and marine products,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

India-EU information society and India-EU Civil Society Roundtable.

- (ii) Increased cooperation in Science & Technology, including networking of centres of excellence, Joint research projects and research & training networks as well as joint research on bio-fuels.
- (iii) Establishing an India-UE macro-economic dialogue.
- (iv) Establishment of an India-EU CEO's Roundtable.
- (v) Increased academic cooperation and exchanges between economic academic institutions on both sides.
- (vi) Promotion of environmental research and development of clean technology.
- (vii) Holding of India-EU Seminar on skill development, training and employment.
- (viii) Holding a seminar on corporate governance and regulatory framework.
- (ix) Establishment of a discussion on public-private partnerships.

Apprehensions of Land-Gamble by SEZs

1515. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether apprehensions are being expressed that the initiatives to set up new SEZs would kick start a land gamble, and fertile agricultural land is being used for the purpose;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken to address the same;
- (c) what measures are underway to make the members of Board of Approvals (BoA) exercise proper vigilance, before approving fresh proposals; and
- (d) whether the extant rules have been put in place for the desired built-in checks and balances to obviate deliberate abuse of developmental initiatives?